

# San Antonio Seniors Softball League

www.sassl.org

## PLAYING RULES

Fall 2011

**GENERAL STATEMENT:** The San Antonio Seniors Softball League (SASSL) is a nonprofit organization established to provide opportunities to senior men and women to promote physical and mental fitness by participating in slow-pitch softball. SASSL has adopted the SSUSA Rulebook ([www.seniorsoftball.com](http://www.seniorsoftball.com)) as a guide. (Selected rules are listed below along with league exceptions)

### **APPROVED BATS**

All bats marked 1.21 bpf or less, SSUSA approved, or have an ASA stamp are approved for use. The rating must be clearly visible on the bat, or it must be obvious to the inspector that the bat is of an age or make that it is not of higher than approved capability.

### **OFFICIAL SOFTBALL**

Shall be a 12-inch ball with a COR of .44 and a Compression Rating of no more than 375 psi, approved by SASSL and having a SASSL stamp.

### **ROSTERS IN A NEW CALENDAR YEAR**

At the start of a new calendar year, all players are considered free agents. A manager signs up players with which to begin the Spring League and/or the team's first season for that year. Roster changes during the season are made via the Roster Change and Player Release Notification form. The form is on our SASSL website or may be obtained from the League Chairman, Vice Chairman, or any League Commissioner.

### **ROSTER CHANGES**

Any roster changes (adds, deletes) must be submitted with completed paperwork to the League Commissioner a week prior to the player participating.

### **RELEASED PLAYER**

Players properly released from a current SASSL roster can join any team in any age division in which they qualify, provided that team is under the maximum number of players.

### **INJURED PLAYER**

A player removed because of injuries cannot be reinstated until the beginning of the next season (spring, summer, fall). An injury must be certified by the manager (with the agreement of the player) and is defined as a debilitating injury that prevents a player from actively participating at least for the remainder of the season. Another player may be added to the roster replacing the injured player without penalty.

NOTE: The League Commissioner has the authority to reinstate the ballplayer due to extenuating circumstances.

### **HANDICAP PLAYER**

Chairman, Vice Chairman and League Commissioner must approve any handicap player before they are entitled to special batting consideration. Handicap player is entitled to have a designated runner from home. Designated runner (last out recorded) to stand opposite side of batter behind extended foul line. Designated runner may not leave before ball is struck. Umpire will declare an "Out" for a designated runner leaving early.

### **PLAYER PLACEMENT**

The League Commissioners, with approval of the Chairman or Vice Chairman, have discretionary authority on player placement whenever there are unusual or special circumstances. This includes, but not limited to, placement in a different age division, placement on a particular team, etc.

### **ROSTER RESTRICTIONS**

**50+,60+,65+** - Teams will be allowed a maximum of 20 players on their roster.

**70+** - Teams will be allowed a maximum of 16 players on their roster and will be allowed two 69+ players in their total of 16 players.

EXCEPTION: A player returning from an injury or other health problem has the option of returning to their former team (with manager approval), provided the team is under the maximum number of players.

### **NUMBER OF PLAYERS CONSTITUTING A "TEAM"**

- 1. 50+,60+, 65+** - Ten (10) players constitute a team; however, a team may start a game with no fewer than nine (9) players. A tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) player on the roster may be added any time during the game, batting in the last (10<sup>th</sup>) position. If starting with 9 players, an out will not be recorded for the 10<sup>th</sup> position.
- 2. 70+** - Eleven (11) players constitute a team; however, a team may start a game with no fewer than ten (10) players. An eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) player on the roster may be added any time during the game, batting in the last (11<sup>th</sup>) position. If starting with 10 players, an out will not be recorded for the 11<sup>th</sup> position.

### **FORFEIT RULE**

In order to avoid forfeits, if teams are shorthanded (less than 10 players for 50+, 60+, 65+ and less than 11 players for 70+), they may pick up registered players in the same or higher age classification until they reach the number of players constituting a "team" for their age classification. A forfeit is called for 50+, 60+, 65+ teams have less than 9 players, and for 70+ teams with less than 10 players. Picked up players will be selected by a drawing from a list of eligible players that have registered with the scorekeeper, and must bat at the end of the batting order. If the shorthanded team cannot pick up enough registered players to reach the minimum number in their age classification, that team will forfeit their game but can pick up players from any age classification in order to play the game. (Any player on the team's roster may be substituted into the game without penalty, whether listed as a sub or not. If the team was shorthanded and picked up a player, a rostered player arriving late must replace the picked up player)

## **COURTESY RUNNERS**

Courtesy runners can only be inserted into the game before the first pitch to the subsequent batter.

**70+** = Unlimited courtesy runners and the same runner can run multiple times in the same inning.

**50+,60+, 65+** = Unlimited courtesy runners but the same runner cannot be used twice in the same inning. *Note: A runner who is replaced with a courtesy runner may not be used as a courtesy runner for the remainder of the inning.*

## **TEAM CLASSIFICATION**

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of SASSL has the authority to classify/reclassify a teams rating based on their team strength.

## **TEAM EQUALIZER (All Divisions)**

The Ratings Committee will assess each team and assign equalizers based on the following three ratings levels:

Level 1 – recreational teams

- Receive a maximum of 5 runs when playing a Level 2 team
- Receive a maximum of 7 runs when playing a Level 3 team

Level 2 – competitive teams

- Receive a maximum of 5 runs when playing a Level 3 team

Level 3 – highly competitive teams

If there is a substantial change in the makeup of any team during a season, the Ratings Committee may revise team rating levels as needed.

**(NOTE: Teams receiving 5 runs will have 1 run added in innings 1 thru 5. Teams receiving 7 runs will receive 2 runs added in innings 1 & 2 and 1 run in inning 3, 4, and 5)**

## **REGULATION GAME**

A regulation game will be seven (7) innings or 50 minutes (**55 minutes for 60+**), followed by an “open” inning.. The time will start when the umpire says “PLAY BALL”. After the allotted minutes have expired, the umpire shall notify both teams that the next inning will be unlimited runs. (With approval of both managers, umpire can declare “open inning” with less than 60 seconds remaining on the game clock.)

NOTE: If the score is tied at the end of regulation, the Tie-Breaker Rule will be used.

## **BALL/STRIKE COUNT**

Batter starts his at-bat with zero ball, zero strike count, no courtesy foul after two strikes.

## **TIE-BREAKER RULE**

Each team will start each additional inning with a runner on second base and the batter having a 3-2 count. The runner will be the last player that completed his turn at bat when the third out was made in the previous inning. No courtesy runner is allowed to replace the runner starting at second base until he has advanced to third base. If this runner is unable to continue play, for any reason, he will be declared out and the next previous batter will be the tie breaker runner. The runner that was unable to continue may not play for the remainder of the game.

### **REPLAYED GAME**

Games that are interrupted shall be replayed from the point of interruption of that game, unless the teams mutually agree to accept the existing score as the final score. Original lineups will be used but if a lineup player is unavailable, substitutes can be used from the team roster. In the event that a game cannot be completed, an official game may be called after five (5) innings of play or 4 1/2 innings of play (if the home team is ahead.)

### **FLIP-FLOP RULE**

After the umpire has declared the unlimited inning AND if the Visiting Team is ahead by 10 or more runs, the Home Team will remain at bat and start new at-bats. All runners on base will return to the dugout. The Home Team will start the open inning. If the Home Team fails to tie or pull ahead of the Visiting Team, the game ends and the Visiting Team wins. If the Home Team ties or pulls ahead, the Visiting Team comes up to bat. If the game ends in a tie, the game continues with a “one-pitch” format using the Tie-Breaker Rule.

NOTE: If the Visiting Team is ahead by less than 10 runs, the Home Team manager (with agreement of the Visiting Team manager) may request that the Flip-Flop Rule be invoked.

### **HOME RUN RULE**

All teams will play under the 1-home run + 1-up single rule. The first ball hit over the fence will count as a home run. Home Run batter need only touch first base and then return to dugout; all other runners need only touch next base then return to dugout. All subsequent balls hit over the fence by the same team will count as singles until the opposing team has hit a ball over the fence (home run). Base runners must be pushed in order to advance. (No “one up” for home team in last at bat)

### **AGE QUALIFICATION**

The age a player attains on his birthday in any particular year will be considered to be his age for that entire calendar year.

### **MERCY RULE**

A 15 run mercy rule will be in effect after 5 innings (4 ½ if the home team is ahead) thus ending the game regardless of whether either team has had their unlimited inning.

### **RUNS PER INNING**

Five (5) run maximum (no runs over) per inning except for the unlimited run inning.

### **BATTER ELIGIBILITY**

A team may bat every player in the dugout listed on the team roster. All batters must be listed on the Line-up card submitted to the scorekeeper prior to the start of the game. The number of batters listed cannot be reduced without recording an out when the vacant position comes to bat. A player on a teams’ roster who arrives late for a game may be inserted at the end of the lineup without penalty. In the case of an injury, an out will be recorded only the first time the vacant position comes to bat. (Exception: if a player is ejected, an out will be recorded every time that position comes to bat)

### **FIELDER ELIGIBILITY**

Only players that are on the official batting order will be allowed to play defense (if you play defense you must bat.)

### **PITCHER PROTECTION RULE**

There are three parts to this rule. 1) Some part of the pitcher's body must be touching the pitcher's box. 2) The pitcher must be struck by the ball. 3) The pitcher, in the judgment of the umpire, does not have time to make a defensive play before being struck. Effect: The ball is dead and the batter is out. (Pitchers are encouraged to wear protective head gear and shin guards at a minimum.)

### **BATTER/RUNNER REACHING FIRST BASE**

Each batter must reach first base on his own. A double bag shall be used at first base, the double portion of the bag (normally orange) being in foul territory abutting first base. If there is a play on a batter/runner going to first base, the batter/runner must touch the orange portion of the double bag extending into foul territory. He will be called out if he fails to do so, except to avoid a collision in the judgment of the umpire. This is NOT an appeal play. EXCEPTION: If a defensive player has to move onto the orange bag in foul territory to make the play, the runner may touch either bag if, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner touched the inside white bag to avoid a collision. Important: The defending player has only the white base inside fair territory to make the putout; his touch of only the orange bag in foul territory will NOT result in an OUT.

### **END OF SEASON TOURNAMENT**

Rosters at the end of the Fall Season are frozen and will be the official rosters used for the End of Season Tournament. Players may not be added after rosters are frozen. Forfeit Rule used in regular season is also in effect for End of Season Tournament.

**Championship game and "IF" game will be 7 innings with no time limit, mercy rule in effect.**